

**REMARKS**

Entry of this Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 because the Amendment places the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; and does not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration as the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution. Entry of the Amendment is thus respectfully requested.

As indicated in the Office Action Summary, claims 1-55 are pending in the instant application. Applicants gratefully acknowledge that claims 7-27 stand allowed. Claims 28-54 stand withdrawn as directed to non-elected subject matter. In the interest of expediting prosecution, claims 1-6 and 28-55 are canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer thereto. Applicants reserve the right to file at least one continuation or divisional application directed to any subject matter canceled herein.

**Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and § 103(a)**

Claims 1-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as purportedly anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly obvious over Poulouse *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 4,716,911). Without acquiescing in the rejection, claims 1-6 are canceled thus mooting the rejection.

Claims 1-6 and 55 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly obvious over Krensky *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 1,927,984). Without acquiescing in the rejection, claims 1-6 are canceled thus mooting the rejection.

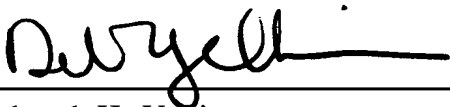
**CONCLUSION**

Based on the foregoing, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. A Notice to that effect is respectfully solicited. However, if any issues remain outstanding after consideration of this Amendment and Reply, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned so that prosecution may be expedited.

In the event any further fees are due to maintain pendency of this application, the Examiner is authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account No. 02-4800.

Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

By:   
Deborah H. Yellin  
Reg. No. 45,904

P.O. Box 1404  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404  
(703) 836-6620

Date: December 17, 2003